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MONDAY, APRIL 28, 1953

THE JERUSALEM POST

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Column One BY David Courtney

Full-Scale Korea Truce Talks To Open Saturday

It was warm, and very still in the streets of Jerusalem except for occasional bursts of traffic, and now and then the curious, plunging sound of a mortar-bomb, like the sound of a heavy stone dropped down a well. They were sounds without meaning. It was like that in the warm, still streets; and even in the houses, where radios were dumb because the current had dried up, as if it had never been. There was an insubstantial quality over all the city, which had become isolated in time as well as space. The rifle and mortar fire fell into the sunlight like tiny glass balls exploding in a vacuum. When two children skipped by, the scene was like something reflected from very far away and long ago on the surface of the light. It was a strange, quiet morning.

THEN a car drew up by the roadside. The driver turned the knob of the radio-set. There came a familiar call-sign (comforting, like a reassuring handshake); and in a minute or so we heard a voice saying that the day before, in Tel Aviv, the State of Israel had been proclaimed. There were several of us standing by the car; soberly dressed, like respectable people out passing the time of day with their friends along the street; one old gentleman with a dark, neat beard and a black hat, and a woman with a shawl about her, who had begun to cry. We looked at each other and round about. It was like waking up of a dream. The city came up through the insubstantial light into the sharp, clear light of day. The two children skipped back along the street, solid and real. The rifle and mortar fire sounded ominously; what they were, and from overhead came the scratching noise of a high explosive shell on the way to its objective. The sense of isolation fell away like a veil. We looked at each other and round about and then ran off excitedly, even the old man with the neat beard and the black hat, to tell the news. Israel had come to pass.

THAT was how the tidings came to most of us in Jerusalem exactly five years ago.

THE day moved on; the weeks, the months, the years. And the slender moment — one of those rare, rich moments in history when man may stand upright in pride and thankfulness — wove itself into the texture of time. Five years are not many. In that brief time a child may grow to carry its first satchel to school; a tree to bear its first fruits. It is hardly more than the moment of the beginning. But if you stand today and look back along the short, stony road the night will rejoice you: the men and women and children brought out of peril; the new furrows deep in a sovereign earth; the ways built through mountain and desert; the loaded trucks; the ships at sea. It is not enough and not always what it should be. But the years behind are very few; ahead they are many; and if the faith of the moment, five years ago, can be made to inspire them their lengthening way will yet lie through splendour.

TODAY the flags beat against the sunlight and the crowds gather. Soldiers parade smartly and people dance in the streets; all because a nation freed itself five years ago and in five years has built well over that freedom. Men were born for that, to be free and to praise freedom, and to build upon it; remembering the moment when the gift was handed down, like a miracle, and the gentlemen with the neat beards and the black hats ran off to tell the tidings, while others, the young and the women looked steadily over their rifle sights; and on the seas the ships moved closer, bringing home the exiles.

THE narrative of freedom is unending; but never more glorious than at its beginning. Jerusalem, April 28.

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Israel Moves To End Tension on Borders

POST Diplomatic Correspondent

HAKIRYA, Sunday. — Diplomatic steps were taken here and at Army G.H.Q. today in an effort to improve the deteriorating condition on the borders. The representatives of Britain, the U.S., France and Turkey were invited to the Foreign Ministry, while General William Riley called on the Chief of Staff, Rav-Aluf Mordecai Maklef at G.H.Q.

The military attaches of the four Western countries most closely concerned with Middle East affairs were received by General Aluf Haim Gonen, G.H.Q. officer in charge of Mixed Armistice Commission affairs, in his office here.

The American Charge d'Affaires, Mr. Francis Russell, who called on Mr. Walter Eytan, Director General of the Foreign Ministry, this morning to hand him Independence Day greetings from President Eisenhower to President Ben-Zvi, was told of Israel's growing concern at recent border incidents, at sea as well as on land.

The Turkish Minister, Mr. Bekirati Istinyeli, called on Mr. F. Najjar, Director of the West Europe Division, at noon and an hour later Mr. Najjar received M. Yves Debroles, Counselor at the French Embassy.

The British Ambassador has been invited to call on Mr. Michael Comay, Deputy Director General.

Good Offices Asked

All these representatives were asked to appeal to their governments to use their good offices with the Arab states, especially with Jordan and Egypt, to prevent further incidents on the border and to fulfil their international obligations as under-takers in the armistice agreements.

Israel's representatives in Washington, London, Paris and Istanbul have also been asked to draw the attention of the governments to which they are accredited to the recent border incidents and to explain the position and its possible consequences.

Referring to Friday's action at sea when an Egyptian naval vessel shot at, stopped and searched five Israeli fishing boats, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said here today that this directly contravened the Security Council resolution of September 1, 1951, calling on the Egyptians to permit free passage through the Suez Canal. This resolution forbids the 1950 invasion of Suez.

French Battle Strong
Vietminh Force in Laos

SAIGON, Sunday (UP). — French troops battled strong Communist armies in northern Laos today as yet another Vietnamese kingdom invaded the Indo-Chinese kingdom.

The French Command announced the French-held fortress of Muong Khoun, 110 miles north-east of Louang Prabang, capital of Laos, and a series of adjoining outposts were under strong pressure of Vietminh forces which crossed into Laos from the Thai country in Vietnam.

Yoshida's Liberals Lead Japan Elections

TOKYO, Sunday (Reuters).

Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida's Liberals have today established themselves as the largest single party in Japan's second general election in seven months.

With 131 seats counted out of a total of 468 in the Lower House the Yoshida Liberals had won 94 seats — nearly as many as the combined opposition. The Progressives had 37, Left Wing Socialists 28, Right Wing Socialists 17, "Rebel" Liberals 31, others 7 — a total of 97.

Mr. Yoshida, one of the men "freed" by the war, had been given the Ministry in the new Government. The two other men, Mikhail Baramiya and Zolotarev, have been made Agriculture Minister and Vice-Premier respectively.

Mr. Baramiya, a Czech, was a member of the Czechoslovak Government in the new Czechoslovak Republic. He was a member of the Czechoslovak Government in the new Czechoslovak Republic. He was a member of the Czechoslovak Government in the new Czechoslovak Republic.

Mr. Zolotarev, a Russian, was a member of the Russian Government in the new Russian Republic. He was a member of the Russian Government in the new Russian Republic. He was a member of the Russian Government in the new Russian Republic.

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Ben Gurion Outlines 'Four Basic Facts'

POST Diplomatic Correspondent

Four basic facts which determine the position and status of Israel and also the tasks and objectives which it must face were listed by Mr. Ben Gurion in an Independence Day broadcast to the nation last night which was relayed by loudspeakers to crowded streets in towns and villages throughout the country.

The growth of the Jewish population from 600,000 to 1,450,000 in the last five years was the first of these facts; the slowing down of immigration during the last year, could not, however, be ignored, nor could we forget that a large number of Jews were still living precariously in the Diaspora, said the Prime Minister.

The second fact was the increase in cultivated land from 700,000 dunams at the time of the establishment of the State to more than three million today; but, even with this achievement, 80% of the land still lay desolate, the greater part of it waiting the redeeming labour of pioneers.

The trebling of the size of our military forces since the end of the War of Independence was the third point made by the Premier; at the same time, he warned that the armies of our neighbours had also been continuously expanded during this period.

The fourth fact which shaped the first five years of the State's existence was the trade deficit of some £140m. That the State could carry this burden was due to the great response of Jews throughout the world, in particular those of the U.S., to the need of the hour. It was the raising of capital on this scale which made it possible for us to achieve such progress, Mr. Ben Gurion stressed. He warned, however, that the fact that we produce far less than we consume constitutes a danger to our political, material and moral existence.

Israel Wants Peace

Turning to the question of relations with the Arab States, Mr. Ben Gurion declared that their efforts to achieve Israel's downfall by maintaining a state of war around us would be as much in vain as their attempt to crush us in war five years ago. "We were not afraid of a test of military strength and we shall not be afraid of a test of strength," he said. At the same time, we would always prefer, as we preferred in the past, peace to war in any form.

The Prime Minister stressed the importance of strengthening the ties between the Jewish people in the Diaspora. "We must so mould the character of this country that Jews will come not because it is better in the Diaspora but because it is better in Israel," he declared.

Torch on Mt. Herzl Signals Start Of Independence Day Festivities

President Broadcasts Message

This day the fifth of Iyar, was a great festival for us, the festival of our national Independence, the President said in his Independence Day Message broadcast over Kol Yisrael last night. We were all united today in joyful celebration of the fifth year of our rehabilitation as a nation among the nations, as a member of the family of freedom-loving peoples said Mr. Ben-Zvi.

We should all remember those who gave up their lives for the deliverance of their people and their homeland.

We ought also to recall today the memory of our late President, the first President of the State of Israel, the man who led his people for a whole generation and who was privileged to guide his people into harbour and take his place at the head of the State — Dr. Chaim Weizmann, who was taken from us this year.

This had been a difficult year for us, the President said, both at home and abroad. We had sought to live in peace and occupy ourselves with the deliverance of Israel and the building of the homeland, but there had not yet been any response to the hand which we extended in peace to our near neighbours; and the position of our brethren in the Diaspora had caused us profound anxiety and concern. Nevertheless, in spite of all the difficulties, our strength had grown and the State had advanced in the direction of economic independence.

Immigration Not to Cease

Our brother-Jews all over the world had rallied more than ever to the work that was being done in the land of our fathers. The streams of immigration, which had been limited for external reasons, had not ceased and would not cease so long as there were still millions of Jews who yearned for Zion — whether they lived in the lands of the Islamic East or in the other parts of the world. It was our duty to let every Jew who longed to build his own destiny and the destiny of his people in the Homeland to come and make his home under the flag of Israel.

The President sent his greetings to all citizens and residents of Israel, in village and town, in the army and in immigrant camps and to the members of the minorities who were loyal to themselves and to Israel and whose future was bound up with that of the whole State.

He went to the Book and Remembrance of Israel that we might achieve comradeship and brotherhood in the Diaspora. The building of the building of Zion and Jerusalem, that we might be privileged to see the flowering of the Jewish people in the Homeland, the establishment of a peaceful and friendly relationship with the peoples of the world, both near and far.

NATION PAYS TRIBUTE TO WAR DEAD

Jerusalem POST Staff

The "all-clear" at seven o'clock yesterday evening brought a sudden hush to the country as it stood silent for two minutes to end the 12-hour Memorial Day which had been ushered in by sirens at seven in the morning.

Flags on official buildings had been raised to full mast at 6.55 a.m. and at 7 o'clock were lowered to half-mast until the evening, in sign of national mourning.

Knesset Speaker Kindles Freedom Flame

Israel's sixth year of independence was ushered in on Mt. Herzl last night when the Speaker of the Knesset, Mr. Yosef Sprinzak, kindled a torch set in an urn beside the tomb of the founder of the State, in the presence of several thousands who huddled in a brisk, chill wind under an overcast sky.

The flame, which signalled the lighting of other fires on nearby peaks and from there to successive high points to the borders of the country, was put out by the wind, but after a soldier had replenished the urn with more kerosene it defied the elements and burned, encouraging one byrander to remark: "That's the spirit of Israel — burning despite all difficulties."

At 7.58 two platoons of Gads youth marched onto the rectangular field and took up positions at its northern and southern ends. Nine minutes later after the Prime Minister's speech had ended, a platoon each of the Navy Army and Air Force appeared.

To the accompaniment of drums and bagpipes the colours were raised and the military presented arms. The five huge spotlights that flooded the field were put out, the flag was lowered to half mast to the roll of the drums, and Tishrei, the prayer in memory of the dead was recited. The field was in complete darkness, except for the floodlight colours; the area was still, except for the voice of the reader, and the whip of the wind.

Light of Independence

Mr. Sprinzak, standing with his wife and Mr. Y. Araz, chairman of the Independence Day arrangements, stepped to the microphone. The Knesset Speaker expressed the hope that the signal he was about to kindle would light up the path of all those who were labouring for the independence of our people in our land.

The solemnity ended when the lights were turned on again, the flag was brought quickly to full mast, and three Gads members — two boys and a girl — ran on to the field with a torch. The girl handed Mr. Sprinzak the fire. Mr. Araz, who descended the platform, walked over to the urn, and touched the fire to the wick.

At that moment fires on the surrounding mountains were kindled. On Mt. Scopus a giant Star of David was lit as were torches along the road from the military cemetery to the unroofed Hebrew University buildings.

Back on Mt. Herzl some 500 voices — one for each year of independence — when the last reverberations had died away, the Kol Yisrael orchestra played 12 representations of Jewish communities throughout the world who had settled in Israel each in an urn set up in a half circle at the western end of Herzl's tomb. With this the ceremony ended and the hundreds of children who attended ran from the grounds with their torches to join the Gads procession that paraded through Jerusalem.

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